

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 are pending in the present application. No claims are canceled, amended, or added by the present response.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by Isokawa et al. (JP 2000-150846, herein Isokawa), and Claims 3 and 4 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. However, in view of the present comments, Claims 1-5 are believed to be allowable, and therefore, Claims 3 and 4 are maintained in dependent form.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1, 2, and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by Isokawa, Applicant respectfully traverses that rejection for the following reasons.

Applicant notes that Isokawa has a publication date of May 30, 2000, and the present application claims priority from Japanese Application JP 2000-110915, which has a filing date of April 12, 2000, thus earlier than the publication date of Isokawa. Accordingly, to remove Isokawa as prior art, Applicant perfects the priority of the Japanese Application JP 2000-110915 by filing with this response a certified English translation of the priority document.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-5 are allowable because Isokawa is not prior art.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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